

DEADLINE FOR MANDATORY SIM CARD REGISTRATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) herewith reminds all stakeholders that the deadline for mandatory SIM card registration is 31 December 2023. SIM card registration is in accordance with Section 77 of the Communications Act (No. 8 of 2009).

SIM card registration statistics

15 June 2023:

Approximately 2,760,804 active SIM cards across all licensed networks in Namibia, of which 795,991 SIM cards were registered, signifying a 29% registration rate.

30 September 2023:

Approximately 2,789,580 active SIM cards across all licensed networks in Namibia, of which 924,453 were registered, signifying a 33% registration rate.

“MTC has the most active SIM card subscribers totaling approximately 2,353,298, of which 799,797 SIM cards are registered to date nationwide,” states Katrina Siken, Executive: Communication and Consumer Relations at CRAN. *“Whereas Telecom Namibia Limited reports 429,732 active subscribers, with approximately 117,585 registered as of 30 September 2023,”* adds Siken. Paratus Telecommunications (Pty) Ltd accounts for 5,437 active SIM cards, of which 5,152 SIM cards are registered. UCOM Mobile Namibia (Pty) Ltd has registered all their 1,113 active subscribers.

“The current SIM card registration rate of 33% as of 30 September 2023, may be attributed to, among other things, resistance from local authorities to avail registration points, power outages in remote areas, and slow customer uptake,” added Siken.

To address these challenges, the Authority requested Regional Governors and Chief Regional Officers to provide free venues for SIM card registration in local authorities and assist with the dissemination of information and awareness amongst communities.

The SIM Card registration conditions mandate users to register their SIM cards with their mobile service provider. Sikeni states that unregistered SIM cards will be suspended for three months after 31 December 2023. If a customer attempts to use the service during suspension period, they will not be able to use the service and will simply receive a warning message.

"During the three-month suspension period, the service may be reinstated, and the customer can retain the mobile number linked to the SIM card, once the customer provides the necessary information for SIM card registration. If the suspension period expires without registration, the mobile service provider will cancel the service and number. The customer must then purchase and register a new SIM card, which shall result in the customer losing the previous mobile number," says Sikeni.

Mandatory SIM card registration aligns with international best practices, bringing Namibia in line with 157 other countries, that have already implemented this measure.

The benefits of SIM card registration include aiding crime investigations involving mobile devices and providing consumers with a digital identity. Additionally, it enables increased access to digital and online services, supporting virtual education, mobile banking, and online shopping.

Consumers can register their SIM cards with their subscribed service provider by providing their full name, proof of residential address, and identity number through a copy of their Identity Document or passport. The SIM Registration Conditions apply to Namibian nationals and foreigners during their stay in Namibia.

Sikeni urges ICT consumers to register their SIM cards before 31 December 2023, to enjoy the full benefits of ICT products and services and avoid losing their numbers.

"ENDS"

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